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Coalition Command and Control: Peace Operations

Dr. David S. Alberts.

Summary

Peace operations differ in significant ways from traditional combat missions. As a result of these unique characteristics, command arrangements become far more complex. The stress on command and control arrangements and systems is further exacerbated by the mission's increased political sensitivity. Current JTF headquarters need to be augmented in a number of different ways to make them more effective in a coalition peace operations environment.

Background

Peace operations encompass a range of disparate missions, including humanitarian assistance, traditional peacekeeping (UN Chapter VI), and peace enforcement (UN Chapter VII). By far the most difficult and complex situations for command and control are so-called "Chapter VI.V" missions—that is, unstable Chapter VI missions that threaten to be transformed into Chapter VII situations. These operations differ significantly from "traditional" military missions in a number of fundamental ways, including: 1) the compression of strategic, operational, and tactical decisions and processes; 2) the ad hoc nature of command, force, and sustainment arrangements; 3) the lack of unity of command or even purpose; and 4) the addition of a civil-military dimension.

The United States has operated successfully in both Chapter VI (Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai, and Able Sentry in Macedonia) and Chapter VII (Desert Storm) situations. In the Sinai and Macedonia, the United States serves as a member of a coalition under the operational control (OPCON) of a non-U.S. commander, and in Desert Storm the United States led a coalition with foreign forces under our operational control.

Yet these two situations are less complex and difficult than a Chapter VI.V operation, albeit for different reasons. In the above Chapter VII situation our *vital interests* were at stake, and hence easier to explain to the electorate. With respect to C2, the relative simplicity was a result of the clarity of mission, and the willingness of coalition partners to accept United States leadership. In the Chapter VI circumstances above, the *political dimension* is simplified by the clarity of mission and the low risk to U.S. forces, while the stress on C2 arrangements and systems is greatly reduced. However, Chapter VII operations that are not delegated to a lead country are likely to have very complex and stressed C2 arrangements (e.g., UNOSOM II in Somalia).

Able Sentry has shown that the Presidential Decision Directive-25 distinction between OPCON and command can work in practice. First, Able Sentry demonstrated that, on a day-to-day basis, U.S. forces can be transformed into blue helmets and integrated effectively into a multinational force commanded by a non-American general. Second, by selectively referring, to a higher authority, orders felt to be inconsistent with the scope of the OPCON, U.S. commanders at Able Sentry have shown that national command is not relinquished.

The classic military principle of unity of command is difficult to achieve in multilateral peace operations.

The degree of "Americanization" that is appropriate for an operation depends upon geopolitical and domestic considerations. Operations tend to become Americanized as a result of either U.S. leadership or a perceived or actual predominance of U.S. forces. Thus, if the United States wants to maintain a low-profile role in a particular operation, then we must be willing to accept the more complex C2 arrangements that may be associated with a lower profile role.

The critical challenge will be to design command and control arrangements and develop doctrine and systems that will successfully function in the more politically sensitive and complex Chapter VI.V environment. This environment implies not only additional C2 requirements but involves a new way of doing business.

CJTF headquarters need to be tailored specifically to support peace operations in general and Chapter VI.V operations in particular, in order to improve their ability to effectively deal with these complex situations and to be able to collaborate with other participants.

Appropriate training and exercise are important prerequisites for readiness to command, control, and conduct peace operations. However, difficult tradeoffs are involved because forces properly trained for peace operations may lose their warfighting edge and may need to undergo additional training to return to fighting form.

Unique Aspects of Peace Operations

Although Chapter VII or even VI.V operations may look very much like war, they have unique characteristics, some of which may be found only in a very small subset of classical warfare situations. It is these unique characteristics that make command and control of peace operations different from wartime command and control, and so challenging to accomplish well. Nine of these unique characteristics follow:

- The need to deal with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private voluntary organizations (PVOs) on a continuous basis will be central to many peace operations. In some contexts, the NGOs have long histories and valuable insights and information about the country involved. In others, they play an important role in creating or maintaining a situation where peace operations stand a chance to succeed. However, NGOs also have their own agendas and are often reluctant to cooperate closely with peace operators.
- The classic military principle of unity of command is difficult to achieve in multilateral peace operations. National interests and prerogatives of coalition partners, while providing room for common interests and action, can differ significantly, thus requiring the need to operate in a

consensus mode.

- The presence of a UN special representative may serve to increase the complexity of command arrangements and impact the ability to make timely decisions when NATO is also involved at the strategic level. On the other hand, in a pure UN operation, a UN special representative can expedite matters by providing strategic direction in a timely fashion.
- The CJTF commander's span of control is often stretched beyond traditional limits. In Somalia, the senior military member of each national group reported directly to the UN commander, giving him several dozen immediate subordinates, ranging from junior company grade officers to experienced general officers.
- Recent coalition peace operations have been greatly complicated by the variety of participants, which created language, cultural, and doctrinal discrepancies. The sheer size of headquarters operations resulting from the need for translators, liaison officers, communications personnel, and other reflections of diversity represents a management challenge. The absence of norms and standards contributes to these problems.
- The amount of work to be performed at the CJTF headquarters level is dramatically increased, not only as a result of the increased complexity of command arrangements, but also because of the compression of the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of command. In Somalia, all three were located in the same headquarters. In any UN operation there is a tendency to expect the theater commander to translate the political guidance (UN resolutions) into military missions—a role usually played by a national level joint or general staff.
- Command and control, communications, and intelligence systems have not yet achieved a suitable level of either technical or functional interoperability to support coalition peace operations. The result: the continued dependence on U.S. technical and systems support, with a host of associated political, security, and financial problems.

The ability to obtain and disseminate both information and commands will become central to the success of combined and coalition peace operations.

- Given the uneven quality and great variety of equipment and the lack of established logistics and sustainment capacity, these technical problems extend well beyond the purview of command and control, making coalition operations heavily dependent on the United States, particularly in Chapter VII situations.
- The ability to obtain and disseminate both information and commands will become central to the success of combined and coalition peace operations. For example, barriers to the sharing of intelligence will adversely affect the ability of a commander to formulate and execute options. Information about national political agendas and positions for coalition members is also crucial, particularly at the strategic or theater command level, and must be sought actively both from foreign military personnel and from political officials in the coalition.

CJTF Headquarters for Peace Operations

Current JTF headquarters should be augmented or enhanced in a number of different dimensions to

make them more effective in a coalition peace operations environment. These include:

- An augmented intelligence capability staffed to filter national "eyes only" information facilitating the sharing of intelligence with other nations involved in the operations;
- A senior political advisor and supporting staff to facilitate communications with U.S. ambassadors and ensure that the political implications of military efforts are properly considered and in-country actions properly coordinated;
- A legal advisor to ensure that international and United States laws and procedures are factored into planning and operations;
- Logistics planning and implementation capability to deal effectively with the range of demands likely to be made by USG agencies, the UN, other countries, NGOs, and PVOs;
- An information and visitors center to handle media relations, VIPs, and celebrity visitors, who tend to appear during humanitarian operations;
- A Crisis Management Operations Center (CMOC) to provide a venue for communicating with both public and private organizations in the area that can be of help in completing the mission. This includes other USG agencies, the host government, various UN organizations, local leaders, NGOs, and PVOs. This model was successful during Provide Comfort in Iraq and the Somalia operations;
- U.S. Special Operations Command (SOCOM) forces should be under CJTF OPCON.

Workshop Recommendations

While Chapter VI missions can often operate with simple C2 systems, these systems will not provide adequate support to a Chapter VII situation should the need arise. Therefore, in the case of operations that have the potential to transform into Chapter VII situations, C2 systems capable of being rapidly augmented should be deployed from the onset.

The capabilities of a JTF headquarters should be augmented to support peace operations and interactions with the myriad of organizations involved.

CJTF force commanders should be selected early and have appropriately experienced staffs that can work together to achieve a level of readiness that will support deployments.

To the extent possible, rules of engagement (ROEs) should be known *a priori* to avoid incidents on the ground setting precedents for ROEs on an ad hoc basis.

Technology applications (e.g., distributed collaborative planning tools and automated language and data base translators) need to be explored to facilitate the collegial decision-making process inherent in coalition peace operations and improve the interoperability of disparate systems.

Individuals interested in workshop participation or workshop reports may contact Dr. David S. Alberts.

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